

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6646
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EG IS PINS
SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO TERRORIST RAID

SUMMARY: PRESS REPORTS EGYPTIAN WARNINGS OF GRAVE
CONSEQUENCES OF ANY ISRAELI REPRISAL FOR TERRORIST RAID
AND NECESSITY OF SOLVING PALESTINIAN PROBLEM TO BREAK
CYCLE OF VIOLENCE. REPORTS IN NEUTRAL MANNER BEGIN'S
SPEECH TO KNESSET IN WHICH HE THREATENED REVENGE ON
PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AND HODDING CARTER STATEMENT THAT
TERRORIST OPERATION SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED UNDERMINE
PEACE PROCESS. BASIC THEME OF EDITORIALS DEALING WITH
RAID IS THAT SOLVING PALESTINIAN PROBLEM ONLY WAY TO
INSURE SECURITY. END SUMMARY.

2. ALL PAPERS MARCH 14 HEADLINE THREAT OF ISRAELI
REPRISAL. AL AHAM: "EGYPT INFORMS USA OF GRAVITY OF
REPRISAL BY ISRAEL". AL GUMHURIYYA: "EGYPT WARNS
ISRAEL AGAINST REPRISAL" (RED BANNER). "BEGIN THREATENS
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AND RESISTANCE GETS READY".

3. ALL PAPERS REPORT EGYPT HAS WARNED OF GRAVE CON-
SEQUENCES OF REPRISAL. IMPLICATION IS THAT FONMIN KAMEL
AFFIRMED THIS TO AMBASSADOR EILTS MARCH 13 AS WELL AS
EGYPT'S STAND REFLECTED IN ITS OFFICIAL STATEMENT THAT
NO PEACE POSSIBLE WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN

RIGHTS AND COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION. ISRAELI REJECTION OF THOSE RIGHTS PLUNGED AREA INTO CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND RETALIATION WOULD ONLY ESCALATE VIOLENCE. PAPERS ALSO REPORTED BEGIN'S SPEECH TO KNESSET IN WHICH HE THREATENED REPRISAL AGAINST PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE BUT THAT PALESTINIAN OPERATION WOULD NOT AFFECT THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT. INCLUDED IN BEGIN STORY IS ALSO REPORT THAT LEBANON HAS ASKED THE GREAT POWERS TO PREVENT ISRAEL FROM CARRYING OUT THREAT OR REPRISAL IN LEBANESE TERRITORY.

4. AL AHAM REPORTED HOLDING CARTER STATEMENT THAT U.S. WOULD NOT ALLOW TERRORIST ACT TO UNDERMINE THE PEACE PROCESS, NOTING, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH ACTS DO NOT CREATE ATMOSPHERE CONDUCIVE TO NEGOTIATIONS. STORY SAID CARTER DECLINED TO DEAL WITH "DISCUSSIONS UNITED STATES IS PRESENTLY UNDERTAKING WITH ISRAEL TO DISCOURAGE A RETALIATION" AND THAT HE "AVOIDED SPELLING OUT WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE" FOR THE TERRORIST ACT. CARTER REPORTEDLY SAID TERRORIST ACTS PAINFUL DILEMMA FOR ISRAEL, THAT ISRAEL HAD LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS TO PROTECT. STORY SAYS "POLITICAL OBSERVERS" BELIEVE TERRORIST EPISODE WILL HARDEN ARGUMENTS BETWEEN BEGIN AND CARTER ADMINISTRATION WHILE AT SAME TIME CONFIRMING "CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S INSISTENCE" THAT WITHOUT OVERALL SETTLEMENT SUCH INCIDENTS WILL CONTINUE.

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5. EDITORIALS. AL AHAM ARGUES THAT "PAINFUL BLOW" OF TERRORIST OPERATION SHOWS THAT STRINGENT SECURITY MEASURE CANNOT STAND IN WAY OF PEOPLE CLAIMING THEIR LEGITIMATE RIGHTS. PREDICTS "VINDICTIVE ISRAELI OPERATION" IN OFFING BUT SUCH OPERATION WILL NOT SOLVE PROBLEM. PROBLEM CAN ONLY BE SOLVED BY BEGIN'S RESPONDING TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE'S RIGHTS, WHICH WILL RESTORE ISRAELI SECURITY. AL AKHBAR EDITORIAL MAKES ESSENTIALLY SAME POINT: THERE CAN BE NO SECURITY THROUGH EXPANSION INTO OTHERS' TERRITORIES OR THROUGH OPPRESSION OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE; RATHER CAUSES OF PROBLEM MUST BE SOLVED.

6. AKHBAR EDITOR AHMED ZEIN COMMENTS OF RABBI SCHINDLER'S ALLEGED STATEMENTS THAT PLO RAID SHOWS ISRAEL MUST HOLD OCCUPIED LANDS AND SADAT'S ASSERTIONS THAT HE COULD GUARANTEE ISRAEL'S SECURITY ARE STERILE. ZEIN BLAMES BEGIN'S "INTRANSIGENCE" FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED AND SAYS LESSON OF RAID IS THAT LAND CANNOT GUARANTEE ISRAELI SECURITY. HAD BEGIN SEIZED SADAT INITIATIVE, WHICH WAS MADE TO BREAK DOWN ENMITY BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAEL, INCIDENT IN TEL AVIV WOULD NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

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